

WHITE HOUSE PRESS RELEASE
STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The United States has successfully developed an advanced experimental jet aircraft, the A-11, which has been tested in sustained flight at more than three times the speed of sound and at altitudes in excess of 70,000 feet. The performance of the A-11 far exceeds that of any other aircraft in the world today. The development of this aircraft has been made possible by major advances in aircraft technology of great significance for both military and commercial applications. Several A-11 aircraft are now being flight tested at Edwards Air Force Base. The existence of this program is being disclosed at this time to permit the orderly exploitation of this advanced technology in our military and commercial programs.

This advanced experimental aircraft, capable of high speed, high altitude, and long-range performance of thousands of miles constitutes a technical accomplishment that will facilitate the achievement of a number of important military and commercial requirements. The A-11 aircraft now at Edwards Air Force Base are undergoing extensive tests to determine their capabilities as long-range interceptors. The development of a supersonic commercial transport aircraft will also be greatly assisted

by the lessons learned from the A-11 program. For example, one of the important technical achievements of this project has been the mastery of the metallurgy and fabrication of titanium metal which is required for the high temperatures experienced by aircraft travelling at three times the speed of sound. Arrangements are being made to make this and other important technical developments available under appropriate safeguards to those directly engaged in the Supersonic Transport Program.

This project has been vigorously supported by the Eisenhower, the Kennedy, and the present Administrations. Appropriate members of the Senate and House have been kept fully informed on this program since its inception.

The Lockheed Aircraft Corporation of Burbank, California, is the manufacturer of the aircraft. The aircraft engine, the J-58, was designed and built by the Pratt and Whitney Aircraft Division of the United Aircraft Corporation. The experimental fire control and air-to-air missile system for the A-11 was developed by the Hughes Aircraft Company.

In view of the continuing importance of these developments to our national security, the detailed performance of the A-11 will remain strictly classified and all individuals associated with the program have been directed to refrain from making any further disclosure concerning this program.